

Helena Nyström interview A 1955

SF: 5 Nov 1955 Astrid Nyström interviewed her mother Helena Nyström, about her time 1884-1908 in Sweden and in East Turkistan. I jump over the first part and copy the part about time from 1902 till 1908. Now I copy it from an open reels audio tape to this audio cassette. Helena Nyström was 71 years old 1955. She had a good memory for a lot of details. She passed away a long time ago. It is unbelievable that we could hear her story now.

HN: (The following interview is mostly about the life of Helena Nyström och her husband Rikard Nyström under 1902-1913). The summary:

Helena lived in Stockholm on Västamannagatan Street. She became an assistant nurse 1908 at Serafimerlasaret hospital. She met Rickard Nyström 1907 while Rikard went to the mission school. They talked about East Turkistan and Rickard talked about his future plan. The 27th September 1910 Rikard went to East Turkistan. Helena went to ET 1911 via Russia. On the 29th October Helena and Rikard held the wedding in Kashgar. The guests were missionaries and even the Governor with kids.

January 1912 the couple Nyström were told to move to Jarkend. It was cold in winter and hot in summer there. She gave birth to a boy with name Lars in Jarkend. 1913 summer Rikard became sick.

(A side finished)

SF: Turn to the other side of the tape (Here it must mean open reels tape).

(Now B starts)

SF: Rickard and Helena Nyström belonged to the 14 missionaries who had been sent out to different mission stations. The daughter Astrid made the interview 1955. Helena was born 1884 and died 1957. Rikard was born 1882 and died 1937. Rikard went to ET first time 1910 after the engagement with Helena in August. Helena went on her education and travelled to ET one year later. They got married 1911. Lars-Eric Högborg was the witness. Their children Lars and Astrid were born there. 1916 the family Nyström went back to Sweden via Russia under the war. 1920 they left their kids to the children home of Lindigö missionary and they went to ET via India. 1926 they went back to Sweden again via Russia. 1932 Rikard travelled alone to ET again and stayed there till 1936. His way back home was still via Russia. In Sweden Rikard worked as Pastor in two parishes. Now we will listen to Helena's story.

HN: (Helena went on telling about their life in ET)

Helena got ill and Rikard took care of her. One night while Rikard was not at home they had burglary. The Chinese officer helped to find out who did that. It was the only incident.

Otherwise it had been nice to live there. She got help from Kashgar to give birth to her second child Astrid. 1915 they moved to another house. They found poisoning insects there.

In summer the family had holiday and stayed in a landlord's guesthouse. The old man had several wives and many kids. One day they went to the bazaar. Rikard could speak the language so he could communicate with others. Summer 1915 Rikard became sick. They applied for passport to go back to Sweden. A German envoy came to ET, the Russian warned Chinese to deliver him to Russian but he became protected and left for central China in the end of August. The family got the passport from Russian consulate and they left ET on 18th September 1916. The way back home was not easy plus that Rikard was ill. There was no milk for the children in Russia and the situation was very difficult.

(C starts)

HN:

The family Nyström had difficult time in Russia and the kids became sick too. They arrived at last in St Petersburg with train and there they got help of Swede Nyman. They then went to Finland and took the boat to Sweden.

In Stockholm they visited the mission church's office. Rikard got an operation and felt better.

They tried to get an apartment in Stockholm.

1920 they fixed passports in London and they left for ET again. This time they left kids to the children's home at Lidingö. The 17th July 1920 they left Stockholm for Gothenburg and took boat to England (London) and then they took boat to the Indian Ocean. Three weeks later after leaving London they reached Bombay in India. They approached then for ET.

SF: Now the travel company arrived Srinagar in northern India where was close to Kashmir.

It took them 7 weeks over Karakorum Mountains. The travel company 1920 consisted of Rikard and Helena Nyström, Oscar Hermansson, Gerda Schönning (?), Gerda Andersson and Carl Persson. But Carl Persson became sick so Hermansson stayed to take care about him. They two came later to Jarkend. The travel started on the 17th July and they arrived in Jarkend on the 5th November. On the 20th September they left Srinagar and 7th October to Milei (?) and 5th November reached Jarkend.